



## City County of Butte Silver-Bow COMPREHENSIVE PARK, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE PLAN

March 10, 2008

7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

2100 Cornell Avenue

Butte War Bonnet Hotel Conference Center

### PUBLIC WORKSHOP SUMMARY

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#### OVERVIEW

A public workshop was held on March 10, 2008 at 7:00 pm in the Butte War Bonnet Hotel Conference Center to gather the input of the residents and community of Butte Silver-Bow. Over 130 individuals signed in at the door and participated in the workshop exercises. The following list of top priorities emerged from the group exercises and the conversation.

#### **Community Priorities for Parks Trails and Open Spaces – Major Themes**

- Focus on improving and maintaining existing parks
- Find and secure appropriate funding
- Provide facilities for all ages
- Create trail connections between parks and facilities
- Renovate/redevelop Stodden Park
- Address interests in specialized facilities (such as, sport practice fields, target shooting, Frisbee golf, mine theme, hang gliding, dog park)
- Improve access and amenities for natural areas (Thompson Park)

The community workshop was facilitated by members of the consultant team from MIG, Inc. The agenda included introductions of the team and the planning process, with a short presentation on the importance of parks in communities; a large group discussion on the strengths, challenges & opportunities for parks in Butte Silver-Bow; small working groups to discuss elements of an ideal park and concepts for the park system as a whole. The group then came back together to share the results of their discussions. The large group conversation that followed addressed the key elements for the park system and priorities of the community.

#### METHODS

A variety of methods and tools were used to gather input from workshop participants:

- Dot counts – Display boards presenting key questions/ Area Maps
- Spatial inventory - Table Maps and stickers;
- Large group discussion – Wallgraphic (attached); and
- Small working groups – Discussion and hands-on design exercise.

## RESULTS

### ***Display Boards***

Three key questions were presented on large boards. Workshop participants were asked to indicate their choice of the provided answers by placing dot stickers on their selections. The table on the following page presents the each question and the top three answers for each.

<b><i>What amenities are most needed in the Butte-Silver Bow parks?</i></b> 1) Other – included suggestions from the public – hang gliding and paragliding landing zone, disc golf course, water recreation, play structures & sport fields. 2) Natural Areas 3) Off-Leash Dog Parks
<b><i>How far are you willing to travel to get to the park closet to your home?</i></b> 1) 10-20 minutes 2) 5-10 minutes 3) More than 20 minutes
<b><i>How do you usually get to park and recreation activities?</i></b> 1) Drive 2) Walk 3) Bike

Images of the board exercises, with the complete responses, are attached to this summary.

### ***Table Maps – Large Group Participation***

Participants were presented with two large maps (one city, one county) and given the instructions to indicate on the maps their favorite recreation features and destinations as well as locations for potential expansion or development of new facilities. Recurring themes surrounded the use and renovation of Stodden Park, improvements to existing neighborhood parks and creating connections between recreation attractions via the trail system. Interest was also expressed for meeting a need for indoor recreation facilities; the provision of a dog park; several ideas for the location of the carousel; and improvements to a natural area near the freeway interchange.

### ***Wallgraphic - Strengths, Opportunities, Challenges***

The initial large group discussion focused on identifying the strengths Opportunities and Challenges for parks in Butte-Silver Bow. Strengths are features of the area (natural, cultural, built, etc.) that could become an asset to the community. Opportunities are elements (such as programs, partnerships or latent interests) that could be explored as avenues to improving services and conditions in the area. Challenges are elements that pose potential difficulties for communication, geographical constraints, implementation (such as limited funding).

Some highlights from that discussion include:

***Strengths***

- Big Butte National Area
- Viewpoints
- Trails
- Volunteerism
- Mt Tech
- Visibility of parks

***Opportunities***

- Fishing pond
- High Altitude Sports Center
- Developing vacant lots
- Community funding
- Soccer wall (Practice)
- Rethink funding sources tax base

***Challenges***

- Improving Transit Links
- Vandalism
- Lack of Equipment
- Maintenance
- Indoor Facilities

***Small Group Exercises***

**Your Ideal Park**

This small group exercise encouraged participants to draw and describe the features that they feel are important to a good park in Butte-Silver Bow. The results of this exercise can be divided in a couple of different ways. Many of the drawings fall into two types – those that address Stodden Park specifically and those that take more conceptual approach to an unnamed “ideal” of a park, though several drawings included site suggestions. Another possible categorization of the ideas generated in this exercise approaches the differences in active, sport-focused parks; semi-passive, natural areas; and family destinations.

**Best Park System**

Another small group discussion exercise asked people to describe the elements that should be present in the best park system. These results touched on some larger issues, such as finding appropriate funding. Again, participants highlighted a desire to improve and maintain the facilities they already have rather than building several new facilities. Safety emerged as a concern and a high priority for improvement. Mitigating graffiti by providing space for wall art, increasing the feeling of security through a neighborhood watch program, and providing more opportunities in parks for older kids to stay active in positive ways were a few of the strategies suggested.

Participants from both of these exercises were asked to summarize their findings by creating a list of the top five elements that should be in every park. Many groups arrived at similar conclusions, the most important and popular features included:

- Drinking water and picnic shelter
- Landscaping that doesn't impede visibility
- Restrooms and waste containers
- A safe play feature
- Clear signage
- Adequate access to transportation and parking
- Furnishings (benches, lighting, etc.)
- Elements for a wide variety of users and age groups

Some of the larger ideas that emerged from both of these exercises include:

- Ownership/ maintenance partnerships;
- A focus on larger parks that meet a wide variety of recreation needs;
- Natural areas with lots of active use and potential for interaction;
- Maintaining and improving existing facilities and structures;
- Building specialized facilities such as fairgrounds, an amusement park or an aquatic park;
- Addressing a need for indoor recreation options; and,
- Identifying opportunities for education in the parks.

The larger group discussion that followed these exercises centered on the discussion of priorities highlighted at the beginning of this summary. Individual ideas, within these themes, have also been collected and will be used to assess community needs and generate recommendations in the final plan.

***Additional Input: Divide and Ramsey***

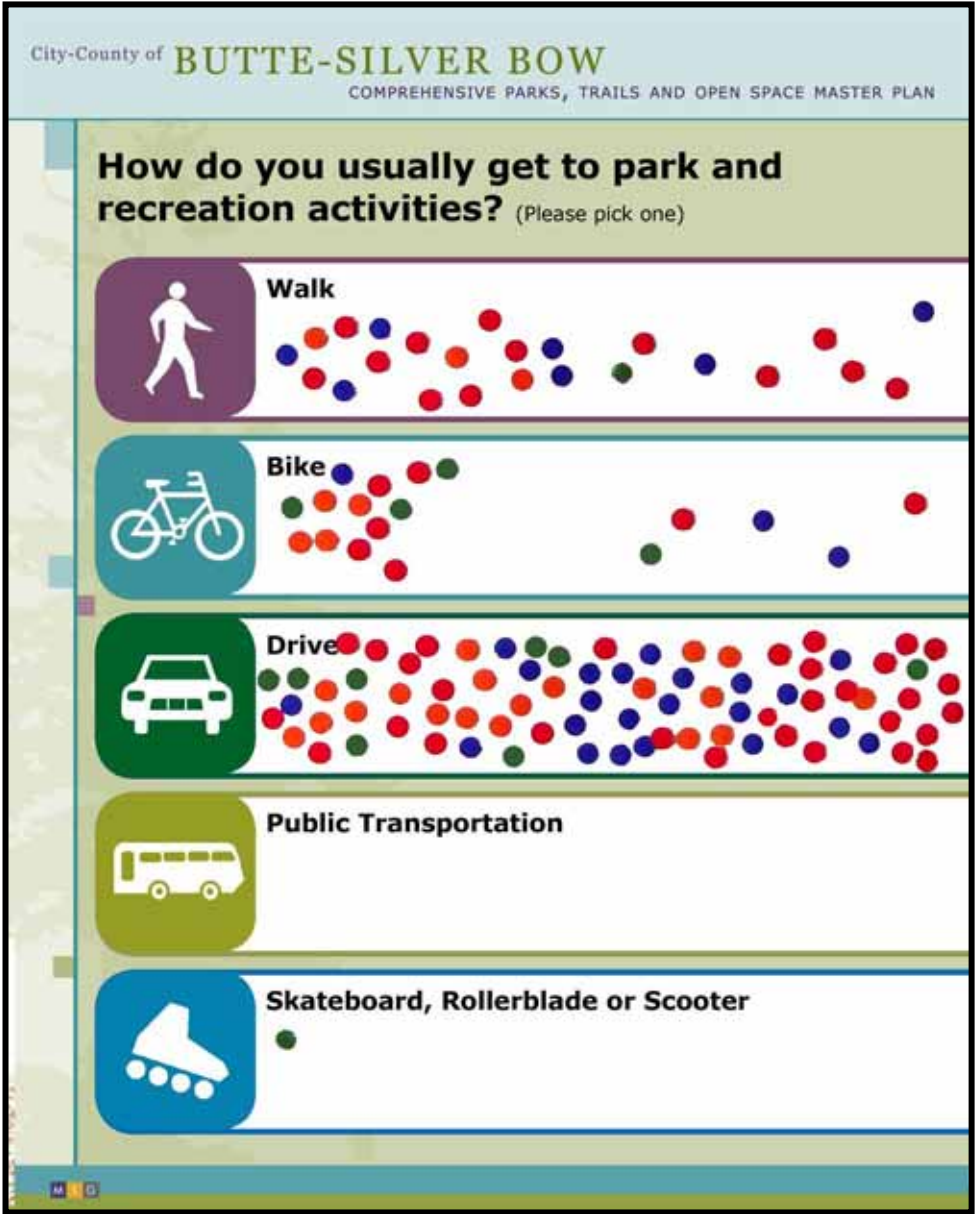
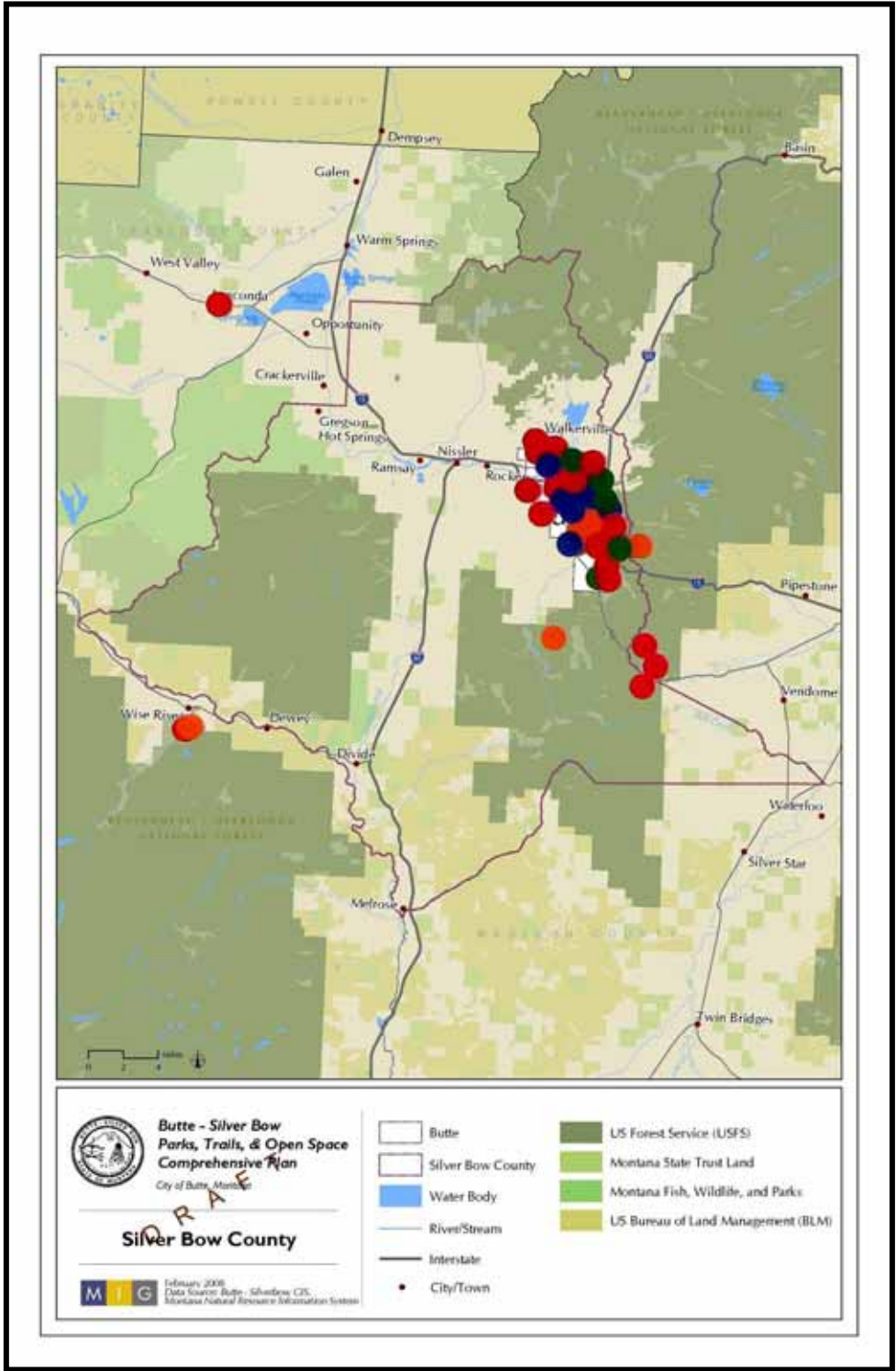
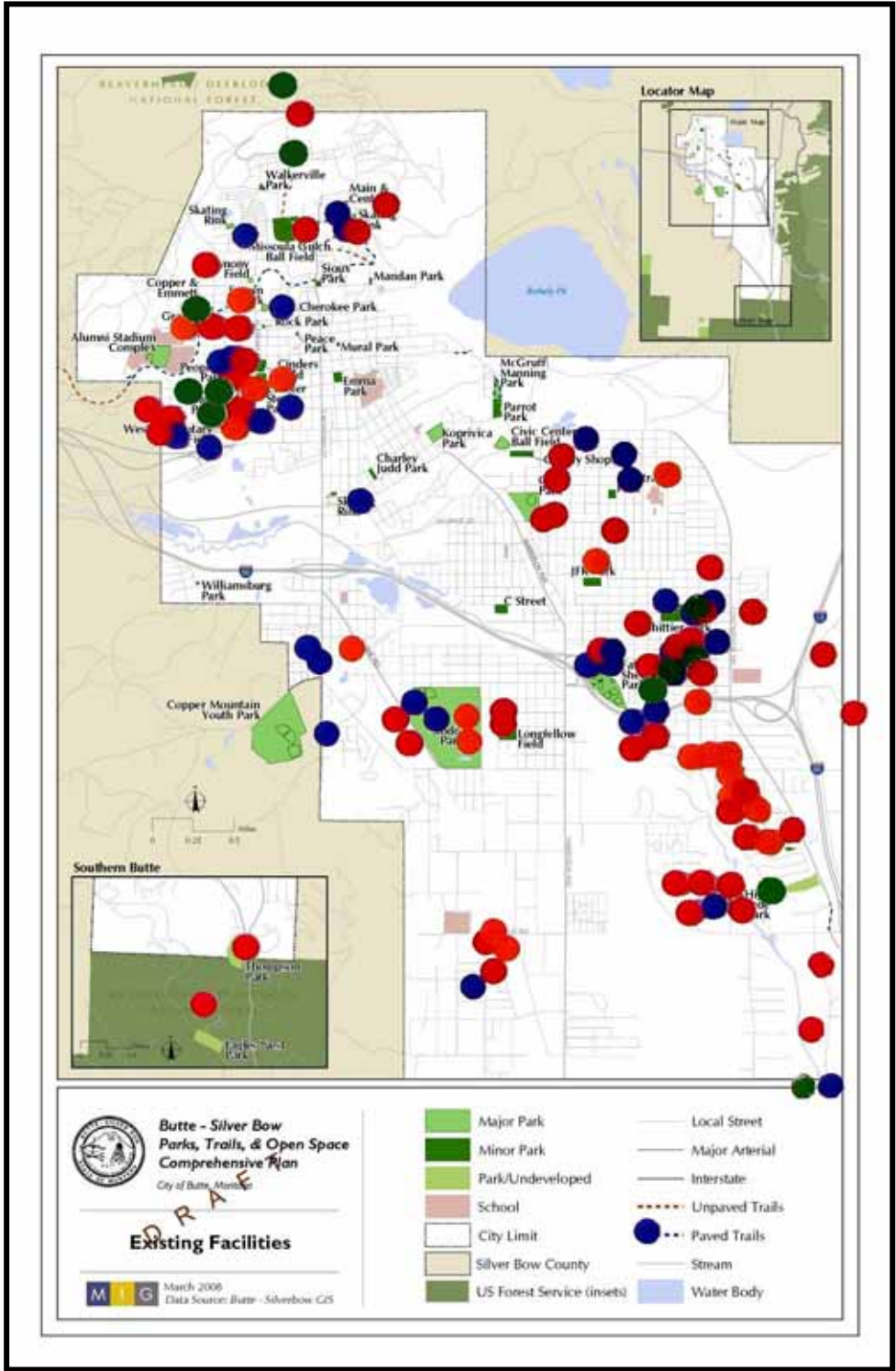
Two additional meetings were held outside of the Butte in Divide, and Ramsey on subsequent evenings in an effort to address the differences park system users in the rest of the county might be experiencing. Participants of that workshop reflected in increased interest in trails for scenic areas; and reinforced the need for activities for youth, with the highlight on those with limited access to the city of Butte. Interest in fairgrounds and aquatic facilities was expressed again. A few new areas were highlighted during the park design exercise, including the Pumphouse area as a larger semi-passive use natural area; and the Pole Plant site as a possibility for location of fairgrounds.



Workshop Participants



Board Exercises



WHERE DO YOU LIVE?



## What amenities are most needed in Butte-Silver Bow Parks? (Please pick one)

Paved Courts



Skateboard Facilities



Off-Leash Dog Parks



Handwritten note: "I need a dog park in my neighborhood"



Picnic Areas



Handwritten note: "I need a picnic area in my neighborhood"

Handwritten note: "I need a picnic area in my neighborhood"



Natural Areas



Other



## What park and recreation facilities do you use or visit most often? (Please pick one)

A park in your neighborhood



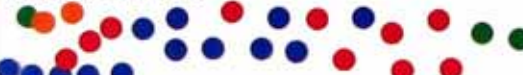
Handwritten note: "I use this park often"

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Handwritten note: "I use this park often"

Stodden Park



A park primarily made up of sports fields  
(Copper Mountain Park, Father Sheehan Park)



Handwritten note: "I use this park often"



Clark Park/Community Ice Center



Handwritten note: "I use this park often"



Civic Center



YMCA



## How far are you willing to travel to get to the park closest to your home? (Please pick one)

Less than 5 minutes



5 - 10 minutes



10 - 20 minutes



More than 20 minutes

